

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Protecting Schools from COVID-19 in Southwest Nebraska

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has partnered with the school districts in the nine-county health district to develop plans for preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the schools. Plans are in place to quickly identify and isolate symptomatic students or staff, and then identify others who were in direct contact with them. Each school has a plan in place for minimizing the impact of COVID-19 and keeping schools open safely.

To assist schools with this process, SWNPHD asks parents and guardians to notify their child's school immediately if they or someone in their household tests positive for COVID-19. It will be especially important this year for families and schools to be in communication with each other. Know where to go for information about your child's school, and how to share important information with the school about your family.

Part of minimizing spread in the schools will be knowing what symptoms children have when they are called in sick, and how many children are calling in sick each week. Nebraska requires all schools to report how many students are absent each week and why, known as school illness surveillance. When you call the school, it is extremely helpful if you can list your child's symptoms and how long they have had them.

The COVID-19 Community Risk Dial for the week of August 17th is yellow. Residents of southwest Nebraska should use caution when at gatherings or in public, including avoiding high-touch surfaces and wearing a mask. Choose outdoor activities when possible and avoid close contact in enclosed spaces. Those who are at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 should stay home.

Additionally, in the past seven days SWNPHD has been notified of 21 people from the health district that have tested positive for COVID-19.

New cases include the following:

County	Gender	Age	Related to:
Dundy	Female	60 to 69	Travel
Frontier	Male	30 to 39	Direct Contact
Furnas	Female	70 to 79	Under Investigation
Keith	Male	0 to 19	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	30 to 39	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	30 to 39	Direct Contact
Keith	Female	30 to 39	Under Investigation

Keith	Female	40 to 49	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	40 to 49	Community
Keith	Male	50 to 59	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	50 to 59	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	60 to 69	Community
Keith	Male	60 to 69	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	60 to 69	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	70 to 79	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	70 to 79	Direct Contact
Keith	Male	80 and older	Direct Contact
Perkins	Male	0 to 19	Community
Perkins	Female	0 to 19	Community
Red Willow	Female	20 to 29	Under Investigation

These cases bring the total to 112 confirmed COVID-19 cases. Many of these cases are related to two ongoing outbreaks in Keith County. Seventy-three of the total cases have recovered, and there have been a total of 8 deaths.

For more information on COVID-19 in southwest Nebraska, visit www.swhealth.ne.gov. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St in McCook.

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